



EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Monroe, LA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely clean up brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years, with additional funding provided for greenspace) to test assessment models and facilitate coordinated assessment and cleanup efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels; and job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years) to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund program (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years) to provide financial assistance for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Monroe for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot. Monroe is located in Ouachita Parish in the northeast section of the state. The proposed brownfields target area is located within a federally designated Empowerment Zone which covers 20 square miles. Nearly 58 percent of the 20,000 individuals residing in the target area live at or below the poverty level, and overall 56 percent of the city are minorities.

The target area is located along the Ouachita River, which used to be a heavily traveled steamboat route. With the advent of railroads and the automobile, the city grew and ultimately abandoned river travel, forcing many riverfront businesses to close. Today, the target area is littered with abandoned buildings and crumbling infrastructure, and the surrounding area experiences a high crime rate, a high drop-out rate, and chronic unemployment.

OBJECTIVES

The city intends to advance Monroe's overall development potential through the Pilot by returning

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Monroe, Louisiana

Date of Announcement:
April 2001

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets abandoned and underused properties in a federal Empowerment Zone along the Ouachita River. Over half of the residents in the target area live in poverty.

Contacts:

City of Monroe
(318) 329-2231

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 6
(214) 665-6736

Visit the EPA Region 6 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6sf/bfpages/sfbfhome.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

abandoned and underused properties to active and productive use throughout the target area. Monroe intends to use an extensive data gathering and information filtering process to identify and inventory brownfields sites. From this brownfields inventory, the city will determine which sites are best suited for redevelopment and then conduct environmental assessments at these sites. The Pilot also will create a community-based brownfields committee that will foster discussion among community members and developers, assess local needs and priorities, and keep the community involved in Pilot activities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Developing a broad community-based planning process to increase awareness and solicit input from the community;
- Conducting Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments to create redevelopment projects for identified brownfields sites; and
- Entering into cooperative partnerships with the public and private sectors to encourage residential and commercial redevelopment in target areas.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.